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Independent evaluation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination the report entitled "Independent evaluation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa", submitted in response to the request of the Committee at its fortieth session.

2. In a separate note, the Secretary-General will provide to the Committee his views on this report as well as observations and comments by the organizations of the United Nations system.

* E/AC.51/2001/1.





UNITED NATIONS

Independent Evaluation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

**Lessons Learned Towards Enhancing the Development Role and
Impact of the United Nations in Africa**

**A Report to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme
and the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission on Africa**

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13 April 2001

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACC	Administrative Committee on Coordination	UNDG	United Nations Development Group
ADB	African Development Bank	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
CPC	Committee for Programme and Coordination	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations	UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
GCA	Global Coalition for Africa	UN-NADAF	United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries	UN-PAAERD	United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development
MTEFs	Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks	UN-SIA	United Nations System wide Special Initiative on Africa
OAU	Organization of African Unity	WB	World Bank
ODA	Official Development Assistance	WHO	World Health Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development		
OSCAL	Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries		
PEAPs	Poverty Eradication Actions Plans		
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers		
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development		
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework		

Executive Summary

This report is in response to a request by the Committee for Programme and Coordination for an independent evaluation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (SIA). The evaluators, three independent experts, have carried out an intensive review of records, elicited written responses to a questionnaire and interviewed more than 100 persons. On the basis of their research, they have set out their findings as to the background of SIA, obstacles to its implementation, its evolution and its impact. The report sets out conclusions about lessons learned and recommendations on the way forward.

Background

SIA was developed by a Steering Committee of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) and launched by Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali on 15 March 1996. The Initiative was conceived as an action-oriented way to heighten awareness of the development challenges facing Africa, mobilize political and financial support for a stronger and more coherent international response, and orient the work of the entire UN system in a coordinated way towards the highest African priorities. As originally designed, SIA identified 20 areas requiring priority attention. It estimated that \$25 billion would be required over ten years to achieve the Initiative's ambitious goals.

Obstacles and Evolution

It soon became evident that SIA faced formidable obstacles. These included:

- widespread scepticism about the motivation for SIA and suspicion that it was related to the question of the Secretary-General's re-election;
- disillusionment over the absence of additional resources to carry forward work towards ambitious goals;
- weak commitment by essential stakeholders, many of whom felt that they had not been adequately consulted, including African countries, donors, UN agencies and UN Resident Coordinators;
- lack of incentives to build support and participation;
- confusion and tension over the relationship between SIA and other UN initiatives, in particular, the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF);
- limited Secretariat capacity to carry out day-to-day management while simultaneously addressing the foregoing obstacles.

SIA gravitated towards a narrowed focus as a mechanism to foster interagency coordination within the UN system for regional and sub-regional programmes. SIA concentrated especially on basic education, governance, health sector reform, information technology and water. At the same time, however, the Initiative was designated in 1997 as the operational arm of UN-NADAF, with

implications of a much broader scope of action than would be consistent with SIA's limited capacity.

The tension between that limited SIA capacity and the expectation that the Initiative would play a broad and significant role in fostering African development increased in 1999. In that year, SIA was identified provisionally as constituting "an appropriate mechanism for coordination of the UN system's work in Africa."

Impact

Enthusiasm for SIA by UN agencies generally waned as the Initiative was shown unable to increase political support or mobilize financial resources for agency programmes. Nevertheless, SIA provided an impetus for agencies to work together. In some cases, the cooperating agencies found mutually beneficial complementarities, leading to productive collaboration.

Experience varied among sectors, with more positive results from interagency collaboration reported in basic education, governance, information technology and water. There was less success when agencies had clear mandates and resources, making SIA oversight a potential burden for them without corresponding advantages. Because collaboration by agencies within the context of SIA was on the basis of self-selection, the limited number of successful clusters did not include a number of sectors important to a coherent regional development effort.

UN Resident Coordinators found that SIA did not connect well with country programmes. Responses to a questionnaire circulated by the evaluators showed that most Resident Coordinators did not believe SIA had a useful impact. Most of them favoured termination of the Initiative and preferred reliance on the United Nations Development Framework (UNDAF) as the primary mechanism for coordination at the country level.

African government officials interviewed in the evaluation showed little knowledge of SIA, and believed it had little benefit for them. At the same time, they had a generally positive view of UN assistance and believed that UNDAF had improved communication between the UN and their governments. African governments are increasingly taking charge of their development, formulating their own instruments, *e.g.* Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), and identifying their own national priorities. They have a keen interest in assistance to strengthen their capacities in this regard. Regional institutions, such as the African Development Bank and ECA, have been responsive to that interest.

Donors showed little knowledge of or interest in SIA. They did not regard it as a significant factor in their programmes and were more interested in country level coordination mechanisms such as Round Tables, Consultative Groups and PRSPs.

Conclusions and Lessons Learned

SIA has achieved only modest success as a vehicle to encourage coordination among UN agencies. Initially, it called attention to the challenge of African development, but this attention was not sustained. The Initiative's more lasting value is its role in encouraging cooperation within the UN system, and especially with the World Bank.

SIA's duration has coincided with the introduction of UNDAF, which has been widely embraced by the UN agencies, Resident Coordinators and African governments. However, SIA deserves some credit for having developed experience that served as a base for the evolution of

UNDAF. SIA demonstrated that with political will and a small amount of resources productive interagency cooperation could contribute to African development.

On the other hand, it is now evident that SIA was overly ambitious and too imprecise. Too many priorities caused it to lose focus. It did not develop operational modalities – specific objectives, strategies, action plans, indicators, etc. – in most sectors. Unrealistic expectations of additional resources and a lack of other incentives for collaboration, such as additional information and expertise or strengthened advocacy for shared objectives, inhibited participation. The lack of incentives, combined with inadequate consultation, left SIA without a sense of ownership from key constituencies - African countries, donors, UN agencies and UN Resident Coordinators.

The foregoing weaknesses were compounded by other factors – uncertain support from top UN leadership, limited and divided Secretariat capacity, scepticism about motives, rivalries among agencies and unclear relationship with UN-NADAF. All of these together substantially diminished SIA's operational effectiveness.

Recommendations

Experience with SIA gives rise to ideas for a new approach. These ideas are set out in general terms and subject to the imperative of thorough consultation with all stakeholders and an effort to build incentives into any new framework so as to assure African ownership and maximum participation by all concerned.

The Millennium Summit recognized the priority that Africa demands of the international community and the United Nations. The question is how best to address the challenge on a basis of local ownership and coherent international support in a spirit of partnership. In addition to the Millennium Declaration's global vision, a specific regional focus for dialogue could draw on the Secretary General's 1998 Report, *The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa*.

From this starting point, the UN might support a set of interlocking dialogues involving African countries and regional institutions, donors, the agencies and programs of the UN system and other multilateral development agencies. Elements of this structure might include the following:

- an ongoing dialogue with African countries to ascertain and refine African development priorities as identified by Africans;
- an ongoing dialogue and coordination mechanism to harmonize programming by the UN system, as part of the broader international effort to respond to African development priorities;
- an ongoing dialogue with donors, multilateral development agencies and African leaders on how to support the dialogue with African countries and respond to African development priorities, including resource issues;
- an ongoing dialogue with stakeholders and reporting to the UN system to encourage and give high visibility to the development efforts of African countries, international support for those efforts, and the priority attached by the United Nations to their success.

Rather than create a new administrative structure, the UN could use existing entities for management and oversight of the dialogue framework. Oversight could be provided through the CPC at the policy level and by the ACC with respect to the performance of UN agencies.

ECA would be a logical choice for a lead role in managing the framework. Logic is supported by ECA's strong track record as an organizer of innovative activities in the spirit of the dialogue framework. Bearing in mind the SIA experience, the new framework would require some resources to improve communication and information sharing with stakeholders and to nourish the work of the cluster groups in small ways. There must be some capacity to add value. Other key partners in managing the framework would be Regional Coordinators, UNDP and UNDG.

What remains of SIA is the existing cluster groups. These should be incorporated into the new framework. However, their contribution is not enhanced by retaining the title of "special initiative" to describe them. The existence of SIA as a continuing special initiative should be brought to a close at a time considered appropriate by the decision-making bodies of the United Nations.

I. Introduction

1. On 15 March 1996 Secretary General of the United Nations Boutros Boutros-Ghali, joined by the Executive Heads of the United Nations agencies, launched a System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (SIA). SIA was conceived as a global effort to mobilize support for economic and social development in Africa and to strengthen the coordination and rationalization of that support. On the occasion of its launch, the Secretary General described the Initiative as reflecting "my personal determination, and that of the Heads of all United Nations agencies, to work collectively for the enhancement of African development."¹

2. Over the past five years SIA has undergone several modifications of purpose, scope and management. The original implementation plan contemplated a ten-year duration for this effort, with a mid-term review by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) in 2001. On 22 June 2000 the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) requested "that an independent evaluation covering the five-year duration of the Special Initiative be carried out and submitted to it for consideration at its forty-first session in 2001."²

3. This report has been prepared in response to the above-quoted request of the CPC. The three authors are independent experts in international development cooperation. They conducted their evaluation during the period from mid-February to mid-April 2000 at the invitation of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Mr. Mark Malloch Brown, and the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Mr. K.Y. Amoako. (Mr. Brown and Mr. Amoako are the co-chairs of the ACC Steering Committee that was established to provide executive direction for SIA.)

4. The evaluators have carried out an intensive review of available records. They have elicited written responses to a detailed questionnaire. They have interviewed more than one hundred individuals associated with SIA. On the basis of their research they have formed judgments, as set out below, about the formulation and operation of SIA, its accomplishments and shortcomings, and the lessons to be learned. In accordance with the terms of reference governing the evaluation, they have also offered their recommendations on the way forward for enhancing and deepening the development role and impact of the United Nations in Africa. The terms of reference, a selective bibliography of pertinent records and a list of persons interviewed are appended to this report, along with other key documents.

5. The evaluators wish to express their appreciation to all who have generously shared their knowledge and opinions about SIA over the past two months. They also wish to express appreciation to Messrs. Mark Malloch Brown and K.Y. Amoako for providing the opportunity to undertake this endeavor, and for the continued support of their organizations throughout the evaluation. The evaluators are also grateful to the SIA Secretariat for unflagging support in carrying out the many administrative arrangements necessary to the completion of the evaluation. At the same time, they wish to take this opportunity to emphasize that the findings and recommendations contained in this report are entirely the product of their own independent judgement.

6. The report contains a number of criticisms of specific acts and omissions by the United Nations system with respect to SIA. These specific criticisms are not intended to detract from the fact that

¹ *The United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa*, United Nations, 1996, p. iii (hereinafter "SIA Charter")

² Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the first part of its fortieth session (5 June-1 July 2000), *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/55/16)*, 2000, para. 307.

the United Nations plays an essential role in support of peace, security and sustainable development in Africa in ways that go far beyond the particular context of SIA. Moreover, The United Nations has invited this independent evaluation with a view to improving the system's performance and its effectiveness in Africa. It is the profound hope of the authors that their efforts will contribute to that end.

II. Background

7. SIA arose out of a desire by concerned individuals to give priority to the development challenges facing Africa. They sought to mobilize political and financial support for a stronger, more coherent response by the international community to those challenges at a time when conditions in Africa were not attracting adequate support from outside the region. They also sought to organize the work of the entire United Nations system (including the Bretton Woods institutions) so as to maximize its effectiveness in that international response.

8. Toward these ends, the Secretary General of the United Nations established a small Steering Committee of the ACC in February 1995.³ The Steering Committee, chaired by the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Secretary of ECA, worked through 1995 to formulate the Initiative.

9. Much of the preparatory work concerned the identification of priorities. This task was largely in the hands of five working groups corresponding to areas of recognized importance. The working groups were chaired by various organizations, as follows:

- Water (UNEP);
- Food Security (FAO);
- Governance (UNDP);
- Social and Human Development (UNESCO);
- Resource Mobilization (World Bank).

10. Preparatory work on SIA took into account previous United Nations initiatives on Africa, in particular the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UN-PAAERD, 1986-1990),⁴ the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF, 1991-2000)⁵ and the 1994 System-wide Plan of Action for

³ Letter from the Secretary General to Agency Heads, 9 February 1995.

⁴ UNGA Resolution S-13/2, 1 June 1986.

⁵ UNGA Resolution 46/151, 18 December 1991. Priorities cited in the Agenda include:

- i. Sustained and sustainable growth and development;
- ii. Regional and sub-regional economic cooperation and integration;
- iii. Intensification of the democratic process;
- iv. Investment promotion;
- v. Human dimension (improved human rights and living standards);
- vi. Environment;
- vii. Population;
- viii. Agriculture, rural development and food security;
- ix. Debt and resource flows;
- x. Diversification of African economies, including trade and commodity issues.

UN-NADAF is now scheduled for an independent evaluation to be submitted to the General Assembly no later than 31 May 2002. UNGA Resolution 55/216, 21 December 2000.

African Economic Recovery and Development.⁶ The SIA Charter asserts that this new initiative "must be seen as reinforcing and not duplicative of either the UN-NADAF or the System-wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development."⁷

11. A comparison of the priority areas of concern identified in UN-NADAF, the System-wide Plan of Action and SIA reveals a close congruence. However, the written record and interviews with those involved suggest that SIA was not initially seen as a part of the earlier efforts. Indeed, the framers of SIA tended to see earlier UN initiatives in support of African development as important political declarations, but inadequate in terms of producing concrete results on the ground.

12. Several of those involved in the formulation and launch of SIA referred to the 1995 evaluation of UN-NADAF by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit as illustrative of a pattern they wished to break. That evaluation had found that UN-NADAF "had no impact on the ground four years after it was launched" and that "there was still general lack of awareness of the existence of the Agenda among United Nations system field personnel in Africa, who ought to be on the sharp edge of its implementation."⁸

13. Criteria identified for the selection of SIA priorities made no explicit reference to UN-NADAF or the System-wide Plan of Action. Rather, the criteria emphasized congruence with African priorities, especially as identified in the 1995 Cairo Agenda of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).⁹ Other criteria included economic and social importance, political appeal, feasibility and UN comparative advantage.¹⁰ Some of those interviewed have also referred to follow up on the goals of the major United Nations conferences as a basis for selecting SIA priorities.¹¹

⁶ Document E/AC.51/1994/7, 9 August 1994. The Plan of Action identified six priority areas:

- i. Human resource development and capacity;
- ii. Food, agriculture and agricultural industries;
- iii. Growth, equity and sustainable development;
- iv. Diversification;
- v. Mobilization of external and domestic resources;
- vi. Growth and regional cooperation.

⁷ SIA Charter, para 17.

⁸ *Evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF): Towards a More Operational Approach?*, United Nations Joint Inspection Unit, 1995, p. vi.

⁹ *Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development: The Cairo Agenda for Action*, adopted by the OAU Council of Ministers in Cairo in March 1995 CM/1892 (LXII) and endorsed by the June 1995 Summit of African Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa in June 1995. (Resolution on the *Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development: The Cairo Plan of Action* AHG/Res. (236-XXXI)). The priority issues identified in the Cairo Agenda (which track closely with the priorities set out in UN-NADAF and the System-wide Plan of Action) were summarized in paragraph 10 of the SIA Charter as follows:

- i. Governance, peace, stability and development;
- ii. Food security;
- iii. Human resource development and capacity building;
- iv. Resource mobilization;
- v. Regional economic cooperation and integration;
- vi. Structural transformation of African economies.

¹⁰ SIA Charter, para. 23.

¹¹ See also the reference to the conferences in para. 14 of the SIA Charter. For a general description of the major UN conferences, see *The World Conferences: Developing Priorities for the 21st Century*, United Nations Department of Public Information, 1997. An update on progress toward the International Development Goals derived from the conferences was presented to the Millennium Summit jointly by the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Secretary General of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund and the President of the World Bank under the title of *2000: A Better World for All - Progress Towards the International Development Goals*, www.paris21.org/betterworld. See also www.cca-undaf.org.

14. Minutes of early Steering Committee meetings in 1995 show a concern for focusing the Initiative on a limited number of practical measures.¹² Nevertheless, in its final form SIA embraced a total of 20 priorities relating to the subject matter of the five working groups. The SIA Charter identified lead agencies and cooperating agencies that were intended to work together to advance each of these 20 priorities.¹³ It also made note of six additional activities recommended by various agencies in the deliberations on formulating SIA areas of concentration.

15. Two particular features of SIA, as originally presented, merit special attention:

- First, the Initiative expressly acknowledged that the critical context for SIA implementation would be at the country level and expressed the intention to engage UN Resident Coordinators in this process.¹⁴
- Second, the Initiative contained cost estimates for a number of the identified priorities, totaling approximately US\$25 billion. (Of this total, education at \$15 billion and health at \$6.5 billion were far and away the largest components.) In this regard, the Charter contained careful language pointing out that these costs were to be met in substantial part by "reallocation from existing levels of multilateral and bilateral ODA directed to Africa and of African national budgets."¹⁵

16. The ACC reviewed the emerging design of SIA at a meeting on 12-13 October 1995. Thereafter, Agency heads provided final comments and the Steering Committee made some refinements and worked for a public launch of the Initiative. An SIA Secretariat was established at UNDP headquarters in New York, initially consisting of a staff director, three professionals and three support staff. In addition, one professional and one support staff member of ECA were dedicated to the SIA Secretariat although resident in Addis Ababa.

17. The launch took place on 15 March 1996, with the televised participation of many notables, including the Secretary General of the United Nations, the Chairman and Secretary General of the OAU, the Presidents of Ghana and Senegal and the Vice President of Kenya.

III. Obstacles to Implementation and Evolution of the Initiative

18. It became evident early in the implementation phase that SIA faced formidable obstacles to success in achieving its worthy objectives. The most serious of those obstacles are described below, along with a review of how they affected efforts to make the Initiative an organizing framework for a coherent contribution by the United Nations system to accelerated African development.

www.oecd.org/dac/indicators, dsbb.imf.org, and www.worldbank.org/data for relevant websites of the four sponsoring organizations. The United Nations Millennium Declaration sets forth an expanded enumeration of international development goals based on the world conferences. UNGA Resolution 55/2, 8 September 2000.

¹² Reports of the ACC Steering Committee on SIA are collected at www.unsia.org/news/index.

¹³ The 20 original SIA priorities were organized within a framework of five themes: "Give Development a Chance," "New Hope for Upcoming Generations," "Strengthening the Capacity for Governance," "Urgency on Survival Issues" and "Mobilizing and Implementing the Initiative." The 20 priorities and the cooperating agencies for each of them are set out in Appendix 4.

¹⁴ SIA Charter, paras. 220-221.

¹⁵ SIA Charter, para. 209.

Threshold Obstacles

19. At the outset, SIA faced scepticism about its motives. Because of its timing, in the month's preceding the end of the term of Secretary General Boutros-Ghali, it was widely perceived as having been motivated, at least in part, by election considerations. No one has produced any evidence to cast doubt on the good faith of all concerned in the creation of SIA. Nevertheless, doubts about the motivation for SIA were pervasive and persistent, both within the United Nations agencies and in the broader international community. This issue was often the first point raised by individuals interviewed in the course of the present evaluation. Its negative impact must be acknowledged.

20. The scepticism about motivations was aggravated by unrealistic expectations about the resource implications of SIA. Although cost estimates had consistently emphasized the importance of redirecting *existing* internal and external resources to identified priorities, there was great disappointment when the estimated \$25 billion believed necessary to carry out SIA did not materialize as *additional* resources. Indeed, it seems likely that frustration over the lack of new resources was magnified because SIA was launched at a time when ODA resource flows to Africa were in a steep decline. From approximately \$22 billion in 1995, ODA was reduced every year through 1999 when the level reached only about \$15.3 billion.¹⁶

21. A third obstacle for SIA involved questions about the ownership of an initiative burdened, as it was, by the above-described doubts as to its motivation and its capacity to mobilize additional resources. These ownership issues arose from key constituencies in several ways.

- Although the SIA Charter emphasized attention to African priorities and several African leaders had participated in the March 1996 launch, there were persistent complaints of inadequate consultation with African governments in the design of SIA. A reference to SIA in the 1997 OAU Summit Declaration was not sufficient to overcome this impediment.¹⁷
- Donors also complained of inadequate consultation and questioned the added value of SIA at a time of shrinking aid resources. They had their own dialogues with African governments and their own understandings of African development priorities. They were generally reluctant to accept the premise that they needed to redirect their programmes in order to meet African priorities as identified by SIA.
- United Nations Resident Coordinators did not find SIA beneficial to their country programmes. Despite an acknowledged need for a focus on specific country needs, SIA did not achieve much impact at the country level. SIA-related retreats were held in only a few countries (Ethiopia, Ghana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia).¹⁸ Moreover, country strategies and linkages to Resident Coordinators did not materialize. Plans were developed for country-level SIA action plans, but were not implemented.¹⁹ Beginning in

¹⁶ See Table 25 in the Statistical Annex to the *2000 Development Cooperation Report*, 2 DAC Journal, No. 1, OECD, 2001, p. 230.

¹⁷ The Summit urged Member States "to implement the Initiative by assuming, in a concerted manner, their share of the responsibility." CM/Doc. 341 (LXVI) OAU support for the UN System-wide Special Initiative for Africa (Dec. CM/1999 - LXVI Add. 7)

¹⁸ Reports on most of the country retreats are collected at www.unsia.org/news/index.htm.

¹⁹ See *The Special Initiative on Africa: A Framework for Country Level Integration*, ECA memorandum, November

1997, the creation of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) and the gradual adoption of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) provided an alternative mechanism for improving coherence and coordination of UN programmes at the country level.²⁰

- An August 1997 SIA Secretariat round of consultations with UN agencies in New York and Geneva found "that the SIA had not been internalised in any meaningful way."²¹ Limited acceptance by the various UN agencies has remained a problem for SIA throughout its existence.

22. In addition, from the beginning, confusion about the relationship of SIA to existing UN initiatives proved to be a distraction that consumed energy and resources. There was evident tension between Member delegations that had been active in framing UN-NADAF (and the directly concerned Secretariat Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries (OSCAL)) and the separate management of SIA. In this regard, the evaluators were reminded on several occasions that UN-NADAF was "intergovernmental" in character, whereas SIA, as the product of United Nations agencies, lacked comparable status.

23. The combination of varied and persistent obstacles to the implementation of SIA severely tested the Initiative's Secretariat. SIA had far-reaching aspirations, status as a major system-wide initiative, a complex array of interrelated priorities and numerous participating agencies. There was need for a day-to-day management capacity that could encourage the various cluster groups to develop specific objectives, strategies and action plans, identify synergies, measure results and communicate with stakeholders. However, the obstacles took up much of the time and attention of the small staff.²²

Redefining the Initiative

24. The confusion and tension over the relationship between SIA and UN-NADAF gave rise to efforts at clarification. In 1997 the CPC took up the revision of the System-wide Plan of Action in a manner that would achieve harmony with SIA. In the course of this review, SIA was directed to give greater attention to regional integration, a prominent issue in the Plan of Action.²³ The CPC

1997. It should be noted that during the period that SIA has been in force Resident Coordinators have been heavily burdened with other responsibilities. These related to implementing reforms in the programming of UN assistance, follow up to the major UN conferences of the 1990s and other matters that competed with SIA for time and attention. A Resident Coordinator was often faced with the need to prioritize competing demands, bearing in mind their relevance to country programmes.

²⁰ See www.cca-undaf.org and www.dgo.org/documents. Rather than SIA providing country-level action plans, the United Nations Development Group Handbook encourages Resident Coordinators, in the formulation of Common Country Assessments, to "take into account and build upon other UNS cooperative efforts such as the United Nations Special Initiative on Africa." Handbook, Section 2, p. 6. However, a survey of Resident Coordinators, summarized at Appendix 7, reveals little appreciation for the relevance of SIA to country programmes and a strong preference for UNDAF as the basis for coordination of UN programmes at the country level.

²¹ Letter from ECA Executive Secretary Amoako to UNDP Administrator Speth dated 7 November 1997, on file at ECA.

²² This situation did not improve over time. During the past five years the Secretariat has had three directors, all capable managers who dealt admirably with very difficult circumstances. By the end of 2000 the Secretariat consisted of a coordinator, with one professional and one support staff person in New York, together with the single professional staff member and single support staff person in Addis Ababa.

²³ See *Proposed Revision to the System-wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development*, Document E/AC.51/1997/6, 14 May 1997. Priority areas in the Plan of Action are listed in note 6, *supra*.

interagency activity with respect to debt reduction, principally in the context of the Highly Indebted Poor Country (HIPC) initiative. The IMF and World Bank, which have lead roles in HIPC, are also the named lead agencies for the debt relief cluster under SIA. However, those agencies apparently have not perceived any added value in identifying their work on debt reduction as a SIA activity.

28. It appears that where an existing coordination arrangement was operating with a recognized leader, there was no evident benefit in placing that arrangement under the banner of SIA, with consequent oversight from the ACC Steering Committee. Rather, the World Bank and IMF in the case of debt, FAO in the case of food security, UNCTAD in the case of trade, for example, operated as before, without much regard to SIA (other than reporting). This is hardly surprising, given the above-described doubts about SIA's motivation, the Initiative's failure to mobilize additional resources, its lack of ownership by African governments, UN agencies or donors, and its absence of effective links to UN field offices and country programmes.

Limited Capacity for an Expanded Mandate

29. Thus, a clear conflict had emerged between the narrowed scope of SIA's activities in practice (as a framework for coordinating selected activities in a few sectors) and the enhanced role for SIA (as the operational arm of the expansive UN-NADAF) desired by the CPC and the General Assembly. This tension continued into 1998.

30. A high level SIA retreat in February of that year led to a conclusion, endorsed by the ACC Steering Committee in March,²⁸ that SIA efforts for the near term should concentrate on priority areas where some success had been achieved: education, health, governance, information technology and population. This recommendation for a narrower focus by SIA was reflected in the annual progress report to the CPC.²⁹

31. The CPC reacted negatively to the SIA report of limited progress and an intention to focus on a few selected issues in its work programme. The Committee expressed concern "that the priority areas mentioned in the report were not exhaustive and, therefore, did not cover all the areas of concern to the African countries." In the Committee's view, "the priority areas of the Special Initiative should be those laid down by Member States in the United Nations New Agenda for Development of Africa in the 1990s."³⁰

32. In its conclusions and recommendations the CPC held that the results achieved by SIA, while interesting, "were nevertheless insufficient as regards the number of countries and the limited areas covered so far."³¹

33. Thus, the CPC was demanding that SIA function broadly as "the dynamic instrument for the implementation of the New Agenda,"³² even as SIA was labouring under "a legacy of doubt

²⁸ Report of the Seventh Meeting of the ACC Steering Committee, 26 March 1998, www.unsia.org/news/index.htm.

²⁹ Progress Report on the Implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s. Document E/AC.51/1998/7, 1 May 1998, paras. 43, 46.

³⁰ Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the Work of its Thirty-eighth Session, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/53/16)*, 1998, para. 317.

³¹ *Ibid.*, para. 324.

³² *Ibid.*, para. 331.

regarding [its] credibility,"³³ limited institutional capacity and resources, and no real incentives for attracting more active participation by UN agencies or others.

34. The gulf between existing capacity and high expectations widened further in 1999. The First Annual Regional Coordination Meeting of the United Nations System in Africa was held in Nairobi, Kenya, on 5 March 1999. The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations presided over this gathering of 23 UN agencies working in Africa. A principal conclusion reached there was that SIA "could provisionally constitute an appropriate mechanism for coordination of the UN system's work in Africa."

35. The meeting called for a report from the SIA Steering Committee co-chairs on how to implement this idea, including on the need to augment existing SIA clusters "to include other priority areas as desirable." Provision was also made for a review after two years of the role of SIA as the coordinating mechanism.³⁴

36. In their subsequent report to the Deputy Secretary-General, the SIA co-chairs advised that, based on CPC and ACC recommendations, the 13 priorities identified in 1997 had been increased to 17.³⁵ The four additional priorities were:

- Regional cooperation and economic integration,
- Economic diversification,
- Gender,
- Population.

37. The report to the Deputy Secretary-General set out a sweeping plan by which all UN agencies would participate in a coordinated mechanism with the following elements:

1. the development of cluster strategies by the concerned agencies for each of the 17 priorities;
2. annual regional coordination meetings of UN agencies, with a focus on harmonising their regional and sub-regional approaches;
3. annual ACC Steering Committee meetings to examine implementation, give policy guidance and prepare reports to the ACC.³⁶

38. This framework was generally approved, with minor qualifications, at a meeting of the ACC in October 1999.³⁷

³³ SIA Retreat Issues Paper, February 1998, para. 10. On file at ECA.

³⁴ Report of the First Annual Regional Coordination Meeting of the United Nations System in Africa, 1999, paras 4, 5.

³⁵ *Toward Enhanced Coordination for Coherence in United Nations System's Work in Africa*, ACC Co-Chairs Report for the Deputy Secretary-General, 15 June 1999, paras. 14, 38, 39. A table of the revised clusters, priorities and participating agencies is at Appendix 6. It should be noted that what were once called "lead agencies" are designated as "coordinating agencies" in the revised table.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, para. 49.

³⁷ Summary and conclusions of the Administrative Committee on Coordination at its Second Regular Session of 1999, 29 and 30 October 1999 (ACC/1999/20).

39. In light of its unhappy experience with the CPC in 1998, and armed with a new, broadened mandate from the 1999 Regional Consultation Meeting, the UN Secretariat (OSCAL and SIA staffs) compiled a comprehensive progress report for the 1999 meeting of the CPC.³⁸ This document appears to contain references to all UN programmes and activities in Africa that could be considered relevant to the subjects identified as SIA priorities, as well as a matrix of actions to follow up on recommendations that had been made by the CPC in 1998.

40. The Committee responded positively. It made clear that it approved of this more inclusive style of reporting, indicating that the "overall reaction to the report, in terms of its content and analysis, was encouraging."³⁹

41. The tension between SIA capacity and expectations was once again addressed in 2000 at the April meeting of the Executive Committee of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).⁴⁰ While noting that the UNDG could not make policy for SIA, the Executive Committee expressed concern regarding the value added of SIA, its wide scope and the lack of additionality of resources. Among other issues, in the Committee's view, SIA –

- "should continue, but focus on a few regional concerns and priority sectors such as health and education;" and
- "should be more closely linked with other coordination mechanisms for Africa such as the Africa Development Forum."⁴¹

42. The Secretariat chose not to propose again to the CPC a narrowed focus more consistent with the limited capacity of the Initiative to achieve progress. Instead, as in 1999, the 2000 progress report to the CPC described as many UN activities in Africa as possible, whether or not they were influenced by SIA in any significant way.⁴² As in 1999, the Committee took note of the comprehensive nature of the report with apparent approval. It also noted, however, that the report "was more descriptive than analytical."⁴³

³⁸ Progress Report on the Implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, Document E/AC.51/1999/6, 29 April 1999.

³⁹ Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the Work of its Thirty-ninth Session, *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/54/16)*, 1999, para 570.

⁴⁰ The Development Group was established in 1997 as part of the Secretary General's reform programme. Its mandate is to foster coordination of UN development efforts worldwide. See www.dgo.org.

⁴¹ Summary of Conclusions, Fourteenth Meeting of the Executive Committee, United Nations Development Group, 8 April 2000. The Executive Committee also recommended that the SIA Secretariat in Addis Ababa "be strengthened through a transfer of resources from New York."

⁴² Progress Report on the Implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for the Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, Document No. E/AC.51/2000/6, 22 May 2000.

⁴³ Report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the First Part of its Fortieth Session (5 June-1 July 2000), *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/55/16)*, para. 299.

Clarifying the Role of SIA

43. The most recent development in the evolution of SIA was the Second Annual Regional Consultation of UN Agencies Working in Africa, held in Addis Ababa in June 2000 and chaired by the Executive Secretary of ECA. (The Regional Meeting in 1999 had been called a "Regional Coordination" meeting, whereas the meeting in 2000 was called a "Regional Consultation." That change of title would seem to imply a less authoritative status for the conclusions of the latter event. However, this seems not to have been the case. In fact, the Annual Regional Consultation seems to have succeeded to the oversight role previously performed by the ACC Steering Committee.)

44. The 2000 meeting identified the SIA clusters showing tangible progress through interagency collaboration as including education, health, water, governance and information technology.⁴⁴ It identified specific actions to be taken during the coming year in each of those five clusters, and contemplated a continuing focus on these sectors in future annual regional consultations. Future meetings, it was agreed, would consider additions to the list of priority clusters on the basis of progress achieved by collaborative efforts, just as progress in water in 2000 had caused that sector to be identified as a new priority.

45. Thus, the 2000 Regional Consultation returned to a concentration by SIA on a work programme within the limited capacity of this lightly staffed structure for encouraging voluntary cooperation among UN agencies. However, the meeting was also attentive to the need, stressed on several occasions by the CPC, for improved reporting on the UN's work in Africa. It was agreed that the SIA Secretariat would work with OSCAL to streamline and improve the quality of reporting while avoiding burdensome and inefficient duplication. Thus, this regional meeting was responsive both to the practical limitations of SIA as an operational entity and the need for coherent, analytical reporting "to succinctly articulate the value added of the UN's work in Africa."⁴⁵

46. Beyond these basic decisions about how to structure the role of SIA in regional coordination (through selected priority clusters) and improve reporting on the UN's work in Africa, the Regional Consultation reached three other noteworthy conclusions:

- First, each annual consultation should include a session on the theme of the current African Development Forum (ADF). In 2000 the Regional Consultation had established the precedent of taking up the AIDS challenge, which was the theme for ADF 2000. For future years, this feature of annual consultations among UN agencies will help assure that the agencies are listening to African views about priorities, objectives and strategies. It responds to the recommendation of the April 2000 undg Executive Committee Meeting, described above, that SIA should be more closely linked with ADF.
- Second, it was stressed that UN agencies should utilize fully country level instruments, working through the Resident Coordinator system. At the same time, an *ad hoc* group was formed to examine ways to strengthen operational linkages among country programming, regional priority setting and ECA consensus building. This conclusion provides reason for hope that regional and sectoral coordination efforts will be made increasingly relevant to and supportive of country programmes and linked to the

⁴⁴ Gender and population, which had been identified for treatment as separate priority clusters in the 1999 memorandum to the Deputy Secretary General (Annex 6), appear to have reverted to the status of "crosscutting" issues, as they had been described in the 1997 report on SIA to the CPC. Progress Report on the Implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, Document E/AC.51/1997/7, 20 May 1997, para. 2.

⁴⁵ Summary of Discussions, Second Annual Regional Consultation of UN Agencies Working in Africa, June 20-27, 2000, para. 10.

UNDAF process which has become the basic tool for in-country coordination within the UN country team. This should help to address the widely held perception among Resident Coordinators (summarized at Appendix 7) that there has been little connection between SIA and country operations.

- Third, it was concluded that resource mobilization is best addressed at the country level on the basis of country-owned sector programs, operating through the UNDAF process in the case of UN agency funding. This conclusion should help put to rest the myth that SIA would somehow generate billions of dollars of additional funding. This would help restore realism to the essential and extremely difficult challenge of resource mobilization.

47. Thus, five years after its launch SIA appears to have found equilibrium as a modest effort to improve coordination and, thus, the effectiveness of programmes of different UN agencies working in the same sectors in Africa. It appears that there is value in having such a mechanism operating at the regional and sub-regional levels to complement the country-level coordination under UNDAF and the global initiatives of the United Nations system. However, questions remain as to how a modest regional coordination mechanism can best foster increased African ownership of the region's economic and social progress and contribute to improved development results. It is also open to question whether this mechanism should be designated a "special initiative" of the United Nations.

IV. Impact of the Initiative

48. The limited time available for this evaluation did not permit a thorough search for specific results that might be attributed to SIA with respect to political support, resource mobilization or economic and social progress. Rather, it was necessary to rely on impressions conveyed in interviews and in the written reports in the record. Judgments reached with regard to various stakeholders are as follows:

United Nations Agencies

49. The initial appeal of SIA to UN agencies was its prospect for increasing political support or mobilizing financial resources for agency programmes. When SIA was shown to be unable to deliver on these interests, general enthusiasm waned. Nevertheless, experience differed markedly between clusters. In particular, in those priority areas identified as successful in SIA reporting it appears that the existence of SIA provided an impetus for agencies to come together. When they did so and found mutually beneficial complementarities, collaboration ensued and contributed to better results.

50. A concrete example is provided in the field of basic education. Here, UNESCO and the World Bank have led a collaborative effort engaging others in plans to reverse the negative trends in 16 low-enrolment African countries. In that case, interviews with concerned officials in both lead agencies indicated that a relatively modest infusion of resources by a single donor, Norway, had been an important factor. The World Bank's Norway Trust Fund became an essential source of financing for joint efforts, such as participatory policy dialogue with representatives of low-enrolment countries. In particular, this enabled a summit of heads of state from six West African countries at Bamako in November 2000 to address issues of low school enrolment in their countries. Both World Bank and UNESCO officials credit SIA with having stimulated their active cooperation.

51. Experience with health sector reform differed markedly from the case of basic education. In health, as in education, the existence of SIA apparently helped to attract a small amount of extra-budgetary contributions to the work of the participating agencies. There was considerable activity, including a number of meetings and conferences. However, the concerned officials of both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Bank (the lead agencies) expressed disappointment at the lack of visible results from these efforts.

52. The foregoing examples are both quite different from the successful interagency collaboration in governance and information technology. Here, agencies are working well together, along with partners outside the UN system. The African Governance Forum series⁴⁶ and the African Information Society Initiative⁴⁷ have engaged African countries and others in helpful ways on issues of common concern and interest. However, the existence of SIA seems to be no more than coincidental to interagency activity in these sectors. Programme managers indicated that SIA is not a motivation for them and that they report on their activities in the SIA framework only because they are required to do so. They do not collaborate because of SIA and would not cease to collaborate if SIA did not exist.

53. The water cluster provides still another type of example. The Executive Secretary of ECA invoked SIA at a technical working group in March 2000 where he appealed to the concerned agencies to frame a common strategy. Thereafter, the agencies, led by UNEP and the World Bank, have overcome years of discord and developed an impressive set of priorities and strategies for water in Africa.⁴⁸ This collaborative effort in addressing crucial development issues, now in the process of implementation, would likely not have occurred without SIA. Indeed, the concerned agencies might not have been meeting together as a technical working group in the absence of the SIA framework. However, as in other sectors, there is no evidence of any substantive contribution from SIA to the content of the strategy or to the sustained functioning of this cluster beyond the technical working group meeting.

54. As suggested above, in most cases of unsuccessful clusters, the absence of incentives and lingering suspicions about the underlying motives for SIA have been impediments to attracting agency support. This was especially true for agencies that had clear mandates and the resources they needed to carry out their programmes without oversight or approval from SIA. For them, SIA could create a bit more work and could slow down their operations. But it offered no advantages.

55. One consequence of the self-selection among agencies of active collaboration in SIA sector clusters is that priorities came to be identified by reference to whether agencies working in the cluster could cooperate rather than by the importance of the sector to African countries. Thus, for example, information technology is more of a priority for SIA than food security because the concerned agencies work well together in the former sector. The food security cluster has not been active and food security, therefore, is not an active priority on the SIA agenda. This seems practical from a management standpoint, but not a sound way to select development priorities.

56. It thus appears that SIA's value to the UN agencies has been as a mechanism to encourage them to work together. In several cases, where the agencies found it to be in their interests, the

⁴⁶ There have been four African Governance Forum meetings: institutional foundations, at Addis Ababa in 1997; transparency and combating corruption at Accra in 1998; conflict and peace building at Bamako in 1999; legislative functions at Kampala in 2000. A fifth meeting, on local governance, has been scheduled for Maputo in 2001.

⁴⁷ The AISI is pursuing a work programme responsive to priorities identified by African countries at the 1999 African Development Forum: national information and communications infrastructure; I/CT for education; I/CT for health; I/CT for trade and business.

encouragement led to productive collaboration. These appear to have involved individuals in the concerned agencies who demonstrated both political will and bureaucratic skill in changing patterns of behaviour. Their efforts tended to be enhanced when they attracted small amounts of additional extra-budgetary resources. In most cases, however, SIA did not provide sufficient reason for change or add continuing value to interagency cooperation. Where political will was absent, SIA lacked incentives to overcome entrenched interests of agencies. Accordingly, the present list of successful clusters is limited and does not include a number of sectors important to a coherent regional development effort.

United Nations Resident Coordinators

57. The failure of SIA to connect with country programmes was dramatically revealed by the candid responses to the questionnaire that the evaluators circulated to Resident Coordinators.⁴⁹ Of 17 replies, all but one of the Resident Coordinators indicated that they were familiar with SIA (although three indicated their knowledge was only slight). Only one Resident Coordinator reported that SIA added significant value to the country programme, and only one reported any ongoing dialogue with the SIA Secretariat. Not surprisingly, only two recommended the Initiative's continuation in its present form and two more indicated that it could be useful if revised to facilitate integration of country and regional issues, emphasize African priorities and/or add resources. For the rest, the majority sentiment was summed up by one pithy comment from a Resident Coordinator, as follows:

"To be very honest, SIA means nothing to us, as we have discussed many times when we meet in Resident Representative meetings. Everything we do as...UN offices in Africa contributes to the SIA objectives, and we have never understood what added value comes from SIA. Does it help us do anything better? No. Do we have any contact with it? No. Should it be shut down? Yes, but everyone is too polite to say so."

58. Those Resident Coordinators who thought that SIA should not be continued and who chose to offer a recommendation for alternative coordination mechanisms all expressed preference for a strengthening of the Resident Coordinator system and use of the UNDAF process. The views expressed by Resident Coordinators in this regard are fully consistent with the conclusions about country programmes reached at the Second Annual Regional Consultation of UN Agencies Working in Africa, described above.

African Countries

59. The present evaluation reflects interviews with senior government officials in six African countries.⁵⁰ To the extent possible, visits to those countries also included conversations with representatives of regional organizations.

60. African government officials showed little knowledge of SIA. The majority of those interviewed did not recognize it by name. All tended to consider its value against practical criteria of capacity to attract additional resources, increase local capacity or diminish administrative burdens in dealing with UN agencies and others in the international community. Viewed against those criteria, African governments considered SIA to be a potential additional burden with no evident corresponding benefit.

⁴⁹ Survey results are summarized at Appendix 7.

⁵⁰ The countries visited were Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal and Zimbabwe.

61. From the interviews, it was clear that African governments regard SIA in the context of a long line of initiatives for Africa's development, some from within Africa and some originating from outside. African governments have a hard time keeping track of all these initiatives, let alone diverting scarce managerial resources to their implementation.⁵¹

62. In contrast to their attitudes about SIA, the officials interviewed were uniformly laudatory of UN reforms of recent years. They consistently expressed the view that UN assistance was responsive to their national priorities and objective in content. They also appreciated UN efforts aimed at streamlining and harmonizing agency procedures and practices. In their view, UNDAF, in particular, has achieved a lot in terms of improved communication between the UN and their governments. There was strong and broad support for retaining that mechanism.

63. At the same time, it should be noted that the evaluators heard many comments about the need to do more to streamline and unify UN procedures in project and programme planning, accounting, tendering and procurement, and reporting requirements. (Issues of harmonized and streamlined procedures, of course, extend far beyond UN agencies. The burdens of disparate and conflicting administrative requirements of donors and multilateral organizations are of growing concern as a drain on local capacity.)

64. The evaluators were impressed by evidence of the increasing trend by African countries to take charge of their own development. Most of those visited have formulated Poverty Eradication Action Plans (PEAPs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and Medium-Term Expenditure Frameworks (MTEFs) from which they derive their annual budgets. They are identifying priorities at the national level and want those priorities to guide the formulation of sub-regional and regional development cooperation. The recommendations at the end of this report were strongly influenced by the expressed desires of African governments in this regard, and by their evident determination to be the responsible owners of their development, to overcome existing capacity constraints and to work together within the diversity of Africa.

65. Views of African countries were also evident from discussions with officials of the African Development Bank (ADB) and ECA. These regional institutions are providing technical assistance to African governments to help them increase their capacity in elaborating the aforementioned instruments of locally owned development strategies. (ADB has a small trust fund from the Netherlands expressly for the purpose of helping countries strengthen their capacity to prepare PRSPs.) Both ADB and ECA report a strong demand for this assistance. In the same vein, the African Capacity Building Foundation has established a budget line to assist African governments increase their capacity to prepare PRSP and related documents.

Donors

66. Donor representatives interviewed showed an awareness of SIA. However, by and large, they did not regard it as a significant factor in shaping their programmes. Participation in established coordination mechanisms such as consultative groups and roundtables and engagement in new partnership arrangements such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) seemed more attractive to them. It was instructive that delegates representing only two of 22 members of the

⁵¹ An ECA website on development initiatives on Africa identifies 30 current initiatives. This database is still being developed and is still less than comprehensive. See www.uneca.org/devinitiatives. See also the OSCAL website on United Nations programmes for Africa at www.un.org/esa/africa. Equally daunting for African governments is the sheer volume of international conferences, meetings and events on themes of African development. See the ECA calendar at www.unsia.org/event.

OECD Development Assistance Committee were sufficiently interested in the subject to join in a scheduled discussion of SIA with the evaluators and OECD Secretariat.

V. Conclusions and Lessons Learned

67. It is clear that the high hopes held out for SIA in 1996 have not been realized. The Initiative has been able to achieve only modest success as a vehicle to encourage coordination among UN agencies, with visible benefits only in a few sectors. With hindsight, it is possible to identify flaws in the development and evolution of this undertaking. At the same time, it is all too easy to see how the decisions and actions taken seemed perfectly reasonable and consistent with the high expectations initially held out for SIA.

Accomplishments

68. At the time of its launch, SIA called attention to the challenges of African development. However, it did not sustain that attention.

69. The Initiative's more lasting value was in its encouragement of greater interagency cooperation within the UN system. Successes in expanding and intensifying active collaboration between UN agencies and the World Bank is especially noteworthy. The programme of UN reforms begun in 1997⁵² took a different approach to country-level coordination, primarily through the UNDAF process. As noted above, that mechanism appears to have taken hold and Resident Coordinators, as well as African governments, have embraced it. However, SIA deserves some credit for having developed useful experience with interagency cooperation that served as a base for the evolution of UNDAF.

70. At the sector level, SIA provided a new impetus for interagency collaboration, which was realized in a few instances. As noted above, that impetus was limited by a number of obstacles, especially the absence of incentives for agencies to participate. But in the several cases where agencies found that their individual interests were advanced by collective action SIA provided an additional opportunity for improved effectiveness. In several cases, interagency cooperation was rewarded by small grants from favourably impressed donors. Such funding enabled small but important measures that otherwise could not have been carried out.

71. SIA demonstrated that with the requisite political will and a small amount of resources agencies could cooperate productively on regional and sub-regional approaches and thereby contribute to solutions to some common problems of African countries. This proved especially true in the case of education and (later) water. In other sectors, such as governance and information technology, SIA did not add content to good interagency collaboration. Nevertheless, the existence of SIA provided an impulse for collaboration that led to some experimentation. In some cases, those experiments blossomed into continuing collaborative relations.

Shortcomings

72. It is now clear that SIA was overly ambitious in its aspirations and too imprecise in its design. An initial emphasis on social issues, such as basic education and health, became obscured as UN

⁵² See the report of the Secretary General, *Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform* (A/51/950), 14 July 1997.

agencies added more and more priorities. By the time it was launched, the Initiative had lost its focus and there was no clear path for addressing all the priorities. Operational modalities such as specific objectives, strategies for achieving them, indicators for measurement of progress from identified baseline data were lacking in most sectors identified as SIA priorities.

73. It is also clear that SIA created unrealistic expectations, not only with its ambitious design, but also with its cost estimate of \$25 billion. That estimate is reminiscent of UN-NADAF's premise that \$30 billion in ODA would be available for Africa in 1992, with annual increases thereafter.⁵³ These kinds of estimates, while intended to demonstrate the magnitude of the need for additional resources, tend to produce disappointment rather than additional financial support.

74. SIA lacked incentives for collaboration by key constituencies whose participation was essential. It did not increase available resources; it did not constitute a source of additional information and expertise; it did not strengthen advocacy for shared objectives. These evident weaknesses undoubtedly reinforced the scepticism about SIA that was widespread in the international community from the outset. As indicated in the above discussion of obstacles to implementation, the result was that agencies with responsibilities in areas identified as SIA priorities often chose to conduct their activities without much regard to SIA.

75. The lack of incentives might have been mitigated by more adequate consultation with key constituency groups - in particular, UN agencies, African countries (governments and civil society), donors and UN Resident Coordinators. Of course, there is always a trade-off between taking more time to consult and beginning to take action on real and immediate human needs. However, SIA failed to gain a sufficient sense of ownership from any of the key constituencies at the beginning and also lacked adequate incentives to attract them later.

76. SIA had no programme resources, uncertain support from top UN leadership and a limited and divided Secretariat capacity. In addition, it was confronted by scepticism from Member States and rivalries among agencies (including between the World Bank and the UN agencies). SIA's lack of a clear relationship with other initiatives, especially UN-NADAF, and its inability to complement the UNDAF structure for harmonizing UN programmes at the country level further diminished its operational effectiveness.

77. These shortcomings in the SIA experience suggest some ways in which UN support for development in Africa could be improved in the future.

VI. Recommendations

78. The authors of this report have reflected on the foregoing limited accomplishments and extensive shortcomings of SIA, against the backdrop of disappointment with previous UN initiatives intended to interpret and respond to African development priorities. That reflection has led to the following ideas, which are respectfully submitted for consideration by the appropriate bodies of the United Nations. These ideas are set out in general terms and are subject to an overarching recommendation - that any decision on how to proceed be taken on the basis of thorough consultation with all stakeholders and an effort to build in incentives to assure African ownership and maximum participation by all concerned.

A Framework for a New Approach

79. The starting point is the reality that Africa presents the greatest challenge to full participation in an increasingly global society, and to human security and well being. This reality commands the priority attention of the international community. In turn, it is and must remain a priority for the United Nations. As the world's leaders pledged in the Millennium Declaration:

“We will support the consolidation of democracy in Africa and assist Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication and sustainable development, thereby bringing Africa into the mainstream of the world economy.”⁵⁴

80. The United Nations must now decide upon the most effective way to give meaning to that solemn pledge and to address the very real challenge of African development. There has emerged a broad convergence in thinking about the nature of the development process and the elements of successful development strategies. At the heart of this convergence is broad international agreement on the importance of local ownership and coherent international support in a spirit of partnership. New mechanisms are in place to put these ideas into practice on an increasingly broader scale. These circumstances provide an opportunity for the United Nations to adopt a new and better approach to the priority of African development.

81. Specifically, the United Nations could express its support for a flexible, systematic response by the international community to development priorities defined by Africans. Rather than try to interpret African priorities and needs and call for particular actions, the United Nations could endorse a structure that would be open to change as needs evolve, while recognizing the need for sustained commitment to long-term progress.

82. As suggested above, a starting point for this new approach might be the Millennium Declaration,⁵⁵ which reflects the broadest possible consensus. Africa should be at the centre of UN follow up to this global vision. A specific regional focus could draw upon the compelling analysis contained in the Secretary General's 1998 Report, *The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa*.⁵⁶

83. A structure for this new approach to support for African development in the new millennium might be built upon a set of interlocking dialogues involving African countries and regional institutions, donors, the agencies and programmes of the UN system and other multilateral development agencies. The participation of regional institutions, in particular the Organization of African Unity and the African Development Bank, would be essential. There should also be room for non-governmental participation, such as the valuable contributions of the Global Coalition for Africa, as well as the private sector. The elements of this structure might include the following:

⁵⁴ Note 11, *supra*, para. 27.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Note 26, *supra*.

An ongoing dialogue with African countries to ascertain and refine African development priorities as identified by Africans. The African Development Forum⁵⁷ could be the foundation of a structure for the conduct of such a dialogue. It would need to be enriched and expanded, including with policy dialogue at the sub-regional level, and informed by input from the country level. This dialogue could provide opportunities for consideration of African-based initiatives such as the Millennium African Renaissance Programme (MAP), currently under discussion among African leaders. It could also be a forum for addressing collaborative relationships such as the Compact for African Recovery proposed by the Executive Secretary of ECA. This dialogue could also include the dissemination of successful approaches and good practices and, if desired, monitoring through mechanisms such as peer review of performance in addressing common problems.

An ongoing dialogue and coordination mechanism to harmonize programming by the UN system, as part of the broader international effort to respond to African development priorities. This could build on the series of coordination meetings for UN agencies working in Africa, inaugurated by the Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations in 1999 and continued in 2000. Continued high level attention to these annual meetings would be a strong incentive for the concerned agencies to participate actively with representation at senior levels. Such senior level participation, in turn, would contribute to higher visibility for a focus on Africa as a priority of the UN system.

Annual meetings at the regional level would need to be complemented by sectoral coordination, both at regional and sub-regional levels. This could be built on the successful SIA cluster groups, with subject matter adapted as necessary to correspond to evolving African priorities. It is recognized that the question of how the UN should organize its operations at the sub-regional level is very complicated,⁵⁸ and beyond the scope of this evaluation. However, it seems essential that the sub-regional dimension be captured by a system for dialogue and coordination. There are many issues that involve neighboring countries in a diverse continent. There is a risk that without a coherent, systematic approach the UN will not adequately integrate those sub-regional issues into its programmes.

As to fitting the UN programmes into a broader international effort, it is important to bear in mind that the majority of development resources are not found within the UN programmes. UNDAF is a valuable management tool for the UN. It is not a substitute for a locally owned strategy (such as a Poverty Reduction Strategy) to which the UN might contribute as one of many external partners – for example, through helping to strengthen local capacity. Thus, a broader dialogue with the international community is also needed. This need is addressed in the third element of the framework, described below.

An ongoing dialogue with donors, multilateral development agencies and African leaders on how to support the dialogue with African countries and respond to the African development priorities emerging from that dialogue, including sources and amounts of resources. The “Big Table” process involving development ministers from

⁵⁷ The African Development Forum, inaugurated in 1999, has provided an annual opportunity for African policy makers to come together to address a major theme presenting opportunities and challenges for the region's development and to build consensus on concrete responses. The 1999 ADF was on the theme of Africa in the Information Age. The ADF 2000 dealt with the challenge of AIDS. The UN Secretary General, who attended the ADF 2000, observed in a letter to the ECA Executive Secretary on 21 December 2000 that “ADF has quickly established itself as a leading vehicle for action on a range of issues.” Letter on file at ECA.

⁵⁸ See *Coordination and Collaboration Among United Nations Agencies at Regional and Subregional Levels in Africa*.

OECD countries and African finance ministers, inaugurated in November 2000, could be an example of such a consultation.⁵⁹ Building on that experience, this broader dialogue could extend to issues of policy and practice as well as questions of responsibilities for action and the mobilization of resources. Particular operational themes might include how best to carry forward and strengthen the related consultation processes and how best to support efforts to build local capacity to advance an African development agenda.

The agenda for this dialogue would be informed by the evolution and refinement of African priorities through the African Development Forum and other mechanisms under the first type of dialogue described above. It could evolve along thematic or sub-regional lines and could lead to the formation of subordinate groups to deal with particular issues.

An ongoing dialogue with stakeholders and reporting within the UN system to encourage and give high visibility to the development efforts of African countries, international support for those efforts, and the priority attached by the United Nations to their success. This fourth element might include regular reports by participating UN agencies on their activities and on progress toward identified objectives. Reporting could address overall performance and achievements, including by African countries, UN entities and the broader international community. These reports should be streamlined and avoid duplication. Information might be organized in a single, consolidated report, which would be provided:

- To the ACC as the oversight body for the UN agencies, in order to promote interagency coordination, operational discipline and efficiency; and
- To the CPC as a policy forum for general consideration of the UN priority of African development, and for onward transmittal to ECOSOC in order to assure that the agencies within the UN system are accountable to Member States for their activities on behalf of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa.

Beyond internal reporting, effective, interactive communication with stakeholders is essential. Consultation at the outset, as noted above, is important. But it is only the beginning. Modalities already in place, such as the publication *Africa Recovery* and the capacity for dialogue developed by the Department for Public Affairs, the ECA communication team and others, could be tapped. An effective communication strategy would need to differentiate among key constituencies. These would include African policy makers, delegates to and officials of relevant international bodies in Abidjan, Geneva, New York, Rome, Washington and elsewhere, as well as the governments and concerned civil society organizations of industrialized countries. It would involve working with media to strengthen capacities in Africa and to engage other communications entities as partners.

Framing a common agenda of UN messages will be a significant challenge. Consideration might be given to forming a cluster of agencies concerned with communications as a part of the sectoral dialogue, just as other cluster groups deal with issues of education, governance, health, information technology, etc. A modest allocation of resources for this purpose would seem necessary.

⁵⁹ The initial "Big Table" meeting, on the margins of the ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, brought together eleven African ministers and their development partners from ten OECD countries and five multilateral organizations. This event was an occasion for a frank exchange on pro-poor growth strategies, international development goals, poverty reduction strategy papers and emerging capacity building needs. The participants agreed that this should become an annual event.

If development in Africa is a priority for the United Nations and commands a significant share of the UN budget and programme, the communication strategy for this priority needs to be addressed effectively and on a global basis. It would be important, therefore, that the efforts of all concerned agencies be complemented by highly visible attention from UN Headquarters. This would help to encourage best efforts from within the UN system and from others. It would also help to demonstrate measurable improvements in the quality of life in Africa and full participation by the region in the community of nations.

Managing the Framework

84. Rather than create a new administrative structure, the UN could look to existing entities to take the lead in the management and policy oversight of the approach described above. Oversight could also be provided through existing structures – by the CPC at the policy level and by the ACC with respect to the performance of UN agencies.

85. ECA, as a regional institution engaged in dialogue with African countries and donors and also sharing in responsibility for UN coordination of regional development efforts, would seem a logical choice to be the lead managing agency. Logic is supported by the fact that ECA has built a strong track record as organizer of innovative activities in the spirit of the framework described above. Examples include the African Development Forum, the 2000 Regional Consultation of UN Agencies Working in Africa and the “Big Table” consultation between African finance ministers and OECD development ministers.

86. Such a role of ECA should be designed in a manner that makes the maximum use of its qualities as a voice for Africa in the UN system, an innovator of ideas and a consensus builder. ECA should not be asked to take on functions that would dilute or undermine its capacity to perform those necessary functions.

87. For example, an important part of the suggested approach would be the strengthening of African capacity to formulate and implement development policies and strategies. ECA should not be expected to convert itself into a major source of technical assistance for this purpose. Rather, with clear and strong support from top management of the UN, as well as the cooperation of UN agencies and the positive interest of Member States, the most appropriate agencies should be prepared to offer technical assistance needed to enhance local capacity.

88. At the same time, management of the interlinked dialogue and coordination fora would require some resources, of two kinds:

- First, an operational budget would be needed to improve communication and information sharing with stakeholders (including, in particular, with Resident Coordinators who are the key actors for coordination of country programmes and the most knowledgeable about how regional and sub-regional issues affect those programmes).
- Second, there is a demonstrated need for a modest programme budget to nourish the work of the cluster groups in small ways. This would include control of some resources that could be made available to participating agencies for sectoral dialogue and capacity building activities in furtherance of cluster group activities.

89. The SIA experience makes clear that a capacity to add value is essential if a coordination mechanism is to enjoy respect and participation. To some extent, the resources (including the Secretariat) previously made available for SIA implementation could be redirected toward more

productive use for this purpose. However, experience has also shown that current resource levels are inadequate. Thus, it would be necessary to examine closely opportunities for other reallocations of resources to support a new framework based on participatory dialogue, local ownership and the active engagement of all stakeholders.

90. It is important to stress the importance of involving the Resident Coordinators in the regional and sub-regional coordination mechanisms in a manner that will allow country programmes to inform the discussions and, likewise, will allow those coordination efforts to add value to the country programmes managed by the Resident Coordinators. This, in turn, means that UNDP and UNDG would be important partners in managing the proposed new framework.

The Future of SIA

91. As to the future of SIA, what remains of the major undertaking announced in March 1996 is the existing cluster groups. These appear to serve a useful, albeit limited purpose in fostering more coordinated and harmonized UN programmes in a few sectors. Adaptation of the cluster groups to a new coordination mechanism, as suggested in the immediately preceding section of the report, would seem desirable.

92. In the view of the evaluators, the contribution of the cluster groups is not enhanced by retaining the overly grand title of "special initiative" to describe them. Moreover, there is a growing concern about the burden created for African countries - and also for their external partners - by the proliferation of initiatives intended to foster development in Africa.⁶⁰ The elimination of one of

⁶⁰ See note 51, *supra*. The idea of a moratorium on new UN initiatives has been raised in recent months. This brings to mind the observation of the Joint Inspection Unit in the 1995 inspection of UN-NADAF, cited above at note 8. After finding the 1991 initiative to be an indispensable embodiment of United Nations development partnership and solidarity with its African Member States, it added the following expression of concern in paragraph 22:

"However, because the existence of so many overlapping programming frameworks inevitably creates confusion, complicates development coordination at country level, and strains the absorptive capacities of host Governments, the Inspectors recommend that consideration be given to establishing a moratorium on the adoption of new regional programmes, and that efforts be concentrated instead on strengthening the central and sectoral capacities of African Governments to integrate and manage existing programmes, including NADAF, within their national development plans and strategies. External initiatives should aim to reinforce the implementation and impact of endogenous programmes at country or regional level."

The termination of SIA and the adoption of a framework for consultation to foster and support endogenous programmes would be in the spirit of that 1995 recommendation.

these initiatives might be a salutary step in moving towards a genuine partnership in support of African-owned development. For these reasons, the existence of SIA as a continuing special initiative should be brought to a close at a time considered appropriate by the decision making bodies of the United Nations. The legacy of SIA would thus be the cluster groups incorporated into a more robust structure to support African development, as described above, and the reallocation of resources heretofore devoted to SIA to support that new structure.

United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

Independent Evaluation

Terms of Reference

Introduction

In March 1996, the United Nations Secretary General and the Executive Heads of UN agencies launched the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (SIA) to maximize the support provided by the UN system to Africa's development and to give practical and coordinated expression to the priority given to the continent in the context of the UN global conferences.

The SIA was envisaged to bring the UN system, in a coherent and coordinated manner, behind Africa-determined development priorities and requirements, as articulated in *Relaunching Africa's Economic and Social Development: the Cairo Agenda for Action* adopted by the African Heads of State at the OAU Summit in 1995.

The Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) designated a Steering Committee, co-chaired by the ECA Executive Secretary and the UNDP Administrator, to coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the implementation of the SIA. A joint ECA/UNDP Secretariat is responsible for carrying out the day to day functions of the Steering Committee. Since the launch of the Initiative in 1996, the Co-chairs have convened eight meetings of the SIA Steering Committee; the SIA has been deployed as a framework for two Annual Regional Consultation of UN Agencies working in Africa (for the years 1999, 2000); and the ACC has considered periodic reporting on the Initiative. The recommendations from these meetings as well as, the findings of technical working meetings and retreats on specific SIA thematic areas have helped fine-tune the approach to UN collaboration under the Initiative.

The Committee for Program and Coordination (CPC) has also reviewed annually the implementation progress and outstanding challenges under the Initiative and offered recommendations, as appropriate. During one of these annual meetings, the Committee recognized the Special Initiative as the operational arm of the United Nation New Agenda for Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). At its last review of the Initiative in August 2000, the Committee took note of the progress achieved in the areas of education, health, information technology, governance, and water, and expressed concern that not enough was being achieved under the Initiative in area of poverty reduction. Against this background, the Committee requested an independent evaluation of the Special Initiative, covering the five-year period since the launch of the Initiative in March 1996.

In respond to the request by CPC, ECA and UNDP in their institutional capacity as co-chairs of the ACC Steering Committee on the SIA, are commissioning an Independent Evaluation of the Special Initiative, covering the period March 1996 to December 2000. The Independent Evaluation is also in compliance with the requirement for a "mid-term review of implementation of the whole Initiative" in the year 2001 as called for in the original design of the Initiative. The Independent Evaluation, conducted per the terms of references below, will be submitted to the 41st Session of the CPC in June 2001.

Objective of the Independent Evaluation

The Independent Evaluation will review and assess:-

- the extent to which the Special Initiative has lived up to its primary objective of bringing the UN system, in a coherent and coordinated manner, behind Africa-determined development priorities and requirements;
- the nature and scope of actions taken by partner agencies under the SIA in support of the evolving objectives under the Initiative;
- the appropriateness or otherwise of the evolution in the approach to and focus of partner collaboration under the Initiative;
- the areas of success and outstanding challenges under the Initiative as well as the key underlying factors and the lessons learned; and
- the Secretariat arrangements including funding and scope of work.

Drawing on the above, recognizing the importance of the work of the UN to Africa's development as well as its comparative advantage, and against the background of the changing circumstances, including the introduction of new operational modalities and initiatives with application to Africa, the Independent Evaluation should offer recommendations on the way forward for enhancing and deepening the UN's developmental role and impact in Africa, consistent with the recommendations of the Secretary General's report on *The Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa*.

Methodology

The Independent Evaluation will be conducted by three senior experts selected on the basis of their stature in the international community as experts on the development challenges facing Africa as well as, their familiarity with the experience under the various internationally sponsored initiatives (including those sponsored by the UN) to support Africa in addressing these challenges. The following three experts have been identified for this purpose.

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It is envisaged to the Independent Evaluation will include the following tasks: -

- Review of the key documents by the three independent experts. The relevant documents to be dispatched to the experts by DHL in early February;
- Initial meeting between the independent experts and the ECA Executive Secretary on the implementation of the evaluation;
- Visit to about half dozen partner agencies with lead or co-lead responsibility in the areas where the progress under the SIA has been demonstrated. (includes three separate missions of appropriate duration - i) US-based mission covering UNICEF, UNDP, World Bank, as well as consultations with OSCAL and CPC members; ii) European mission covering UNESCO; and Africa-based mission covering WHO (Harare), UNEP, and ECA);
- Consultations with key Government officials and Resident Coordinators in about five to eight countries selected on the basis of the level of their awareness of the SIA. These could be the countries that have had SIA Retreats. The independent evaluators will conduct telephonic and/or field visit consultations, as is deemed necessary and feasible, to solicit their views on the SIA;
- Consultations with two or three CPC members in New York, including chairperson of the Africa Group;
- Consultations with the Joint SIA Secretariat and OSCAL; and
- Interview with individuals most knowledgeable on the original design of the SIA.

The experts will start their work in February 2001. The Independent Evaluators will submit their report to the Co-chairs of the ACC Steering Committee on the SIA, by the first week of April 2001 at the latest, for transmittal to the UN Deputy Secretary General. The report will be submitted to CPC through OSCAL (DESA).

Selected Bibliography of Reference Documents

I. Baseline

1. SIA Charter (March 1996)

II. Think Pieces

2. ECA paper on SIA Retrospective Analysis, (November 1997)
3. ECA paper on SIA Framework for Country Level Implementation, (November 1997)
4. Issues Paper for SIA Retreat (February 1998)
5. ECA Paper on Coordination and Collaboration among United Nations Agencies at Regional and Sub-regional Levels in Africa (March 1999)
6. ECA Paper on the UN's Role in Africa (November 1999)
7. ACC Co-Chairs' Report to the Deputy Secretary General (June 1999)
8. ECA Briefing Paper on New Global Compact with Africa (February 2001)

III. Steering Committee Meetings – Summary of Discussions

9. Second Meeting of the ACC Steering Committee (May 1995)
10. Third Meeting of the ACC Steering Committee (July 1995)
11. Fourth Meeting of the ACC Steering Committee (May 1996)
12. Fifth Meeting of the ACC Steering Committee (September 1996)
13. Sixth Meeting of the ACC Steering Committee (April 1997)
14. Seventh Meeting of the ACC Steering Committee (April 1998)
15. Eighth Meeting of the ACC Steering Committee (March 1999)

IV. Annual Regional Consultation Meetings – Minutes

16. First Annual Regional Coordination Meeting (March 1999)
17. Second Annual Regional Consultation (June 2000)

V. Technical Working Meetings and Other Sectoral Reports

18. Report on Information and Communication Infrastructure (May 1996)
19. Meeting on Health Strategy (August 1996)
20. Report on Health Strategy (September 1996)
21. Meeting on Education, Health, Water and Cross-cutting Issues (March 1997)
22. Meeting on Education and Governance (September 1997)
23. Meeting on Resource Mobilization Strategy (September 1998)
24. Meeting on Health (October 1998)
25. Report on Basic Education (April 1999)
26. Report on Poverty Reduction Programme of Action (November 1999)
27. Meeting on Water (March 2000)

VI. Annual Progress Reports to the CPC and Related CPC Reports

- 28. SIA Progress Report (May 1997)
- 29. System-wide Plan of Action Report (May 1997)
- 30. SIA Progress Report (May 1998)
- 31. SIA Progress Report (April 1999)
- 32. SIA Progress Report (May 2000)

VI. Other Meetings

- 33. ACC (October 1994-December 1999)
- 34. SIA Retreat (February 1998)
- 35. UNDG Executive Committee (April 2000)

VII. Messages from UN Secretary-General

- 36. Boutros Boutros-Ghali (February 1995)
- 37. Kofi Annan (March 1998)

VII. UN-NADAF

- 38. NADAF Charter (December 1991)
- 39. JIU Evaluation (1995)
- 40. Mid-term Review Reports (August, September 1996)
- 41. Progress Reports (September 1998, September 2000)

VIII. Other Major UN Documents

- 42. Secretary General's Report on the Causes of Conflict and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa (April 1998)
- 43. Millennium Declaration (September 2000)

List of Persons Interviewed

Ruth Abraham, UNDG

Radhia Achouri, Permanent Mission of Tunisia to the United Nations

Rafeeudin Ahmed, former Associate Administrator, UNDP

Bisrat Aklilu, Deputy Executive Director, UNOPS

K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary, ECA

Julius Andregg, Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations

J. Victor Angelo, UN Resident Coordinator for Zimbabwe

Alione Badiane, Chief Regional Officer, UN HABITAT

Ibrahima Bah-Lalya, UNESCO

Beryl Bentley-Anderson, Permanent Mission of the United States to the United Nations

Robert Berg, Former SIA Technical Team and now Consultant to ECA

Karima Ben Soltane Bounemra, Director, Development Information Services Division, ECA

Keith Brown, Deputy Assistant Administrator, USAID

Richard Carey, Acting Director for Development Cooperation, OECD

Tirirai I Chivore, UN Resident Coordinator for Kenya

Aenbeas Chuma, UNDP Maputo Office

Aissatou Cisse-Yao Tao, UNDP Abidjan Office

Siaka Coulibali, UNDP Abidjan Office

Adama Coulibaly, UNDP Conakry Office

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Hans D'Orville, Director of Strategic Planning, UNESCO

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Emmanuel de Casterle, UN Resident Coordinator for Mozambique

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Zephirin Diabré, Associate Administrator, UNDP

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Stephen Donkor, Water Advisor, ECA

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Mr. A.M. Dualeh, African Development Bank

Ayman Elgamal, Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United States

Jean-Claude Faure, DAC Chairman, OECD

Makane Faye, ECA

Sally Fegan-Wyles, UN Resident Coordinator for Tanzania

Louise Frechette, Deputy Secretary General, UN

Birger Fredriksen, Director, Human Development, Africa Region, World Bank

Ibrahim Gambari, Under Secretary and Special Adviser on Africa to the Secretary General, UN

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Manuela Goncalves, UNDP Maputo Office

G.E. Gondwe, Director, African Department, IMF

Trevor Gordon-Somers, former Director, SIA Secretariat, UNDP

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Mohamed Lamine Haidara, Head, National Project Execution Unit, Government of Mali

Gregory Hancock, World Bank

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Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Former Assistant Administrator, UNDP

Abraham Joseph, OSCAL

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Mats Karlsson, Vice President, World Bank

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L. Matsvayi, Deputy Director, Aid Coordination, Ministry of Finance, Government of Zimbabwe

Christina Matusse, Head, Macroeconomic Department, Ministry of Planning and Finance, Government of Mozambique

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Orega Ndiaye, Director, Cooperation Unit, African Development Bank

Theodore Nkodo, Director, Central Operations, African Development Bank

Bernard Ntegeye, Coordinator, SIA Secretariat, UNDP

James Nxumalo, Director, Development Management Division, ECA

Samuel Nyambi, UN Resident Coordinator for Ethiopia

Ohene Nyanin, Manager, Partnership Group, Africa Region, World Bank

Ernest Nzekio, former Principal Advisor, SIA Secretariat, UNDP

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Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, Executive Secretary, Global Coalition for Africa

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Peter Vandor, UNDP Maputo Office

Hinshinichi Yamamaka, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

Mohammad Yusuf, Permanent Mission of Tanzania to the United Nations

René Zapata, UNESCO

Original SIA Priorities and Cooperating Agencies

COOPERATION IN IMPLEMENTING THE SPECIAL INITIATIVE ON AFRICA	
Priorities	Cooperating Agencies
1. Assuring Sustainable and Equitable Freshwater	*UNEP, UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, WORLD BANK, ECA, WHO, UNIDO, WMO, SADC, UNESCO
2. Household Water Security	*UNICEF, *WHO, *UNDP, *WORLD BANK, UNESCO
3. Freshwater Assessments	*WMO, UNESCO
4. Water for Food Production	*FAO, UNDP, WFP, ECA, WORLD BANK, IFAD, DDSMS, UNEP
5. Land Degradation and Desertification Control	*FAO, UNDP, IFAD, UNESCO, UNEP
6. Soil Quality improvement	*FAO, UNESCO, UNIDO
7. Food Security with special emphasis on women	*FAO, WFP, UNIFEM, IFAD, UNICEF
8. Peace-building Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation through	
a. Strengthening OAU's Capacity for Peace-building	*UNDP, UNHCHR
b. Strengthening Civil Society for Peace-building	*ECA, *UNDP
c. Communications for Peace-building	*UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, FAO
9. Capacity Building for Governance	*UNDP, ECA, WORLD BANK, UNHCHR
10. Strengthening Civil Society for Development (including Peace-building)	*ECA, UNDP, UNESCO
11. Harnessing information Technology for Development	*WORLD BANK, *ECA, UNESCO, UNCTAD, ITU, UNIDO
12. Partnership with Africa through South-South Cooperation	*ECA, ECLAC, ESCAP, UNCTAD, DPCSD, UNESCO, UNIDO
13. Basic Education for All African Children	*WORLD BANK, *UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNDP
14. Health Sector Reform	*WORLD BANK, *WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA
15. Poverty Reduction through the Promotion of the informal sector and Employment Generating Opportunities	*ECA, *ILO, UNDP, DPCSD, WORLD BANK, UNIDO, UNESCO, IFAD, FAO, WFP
16. Sustainable Livelihoods in Environmentally Marginal Areas	*UNDP, *UNSO, FAO, WFP, IFAD
17. Substantial Debt Relief	*UNDP
18. Partnership Innovations for Effective Development Cooperation with	
a. Goal Oriented Regional For a	*WORLD BANK, *UNDP
b. Use of Goal-Oriented Country Programmes	*WORLD BANK, *UNDP
c. Broadening Participation in Consultative Groups and Roundtables	*WORLD BANK, *UNDP
19. Trade Access and Opportunities	*UNDP, *WTO, UNIDO, FAO, ECA, WORLD BANK, ADB, UNDP ITC, UNESCO
20. Internal Resource Mobilization	*WORLD BANK, ECA

Note: * Lead Agency

Source: SIA Charter, p. 34.

Cooperation in Implementing the Special Initiative on Africa

Priorities	Lead Agencies	Cooperating Agencies
1. WATER a. Assuring Sustainable and Equitable Freshwater b. Household Water Security c. Freshwater Assessments d. Water for Food Production	World Bank, UNEP World Bank, UNEP World Bank, UNEP World Bank, UNEP	UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, ECA, WHO, UNIDO, WMO, SADC, UNESCO UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, UNESCO, HABITAT WMO, UNESCO, IAEA FAO, UNEP, WFP, ECA, IFAD, DDSMS, WMO, IAEA
2. FOOD SECURITY a. Land Degradation and Desertification Control b. Soil Quality Improvement c. Food Security with special emphasis on women	FAO FAO FAO	UNDP, IFAD, UNESCO, UNEP, WMO, IAEA UNESCO, UNIDO, UNEP, IAEA WFP, UNIFEM, IFAD, UNICEF
3. GOVERNANCE a. Peace-building, Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation through: i. Strengthening OAU's Capacity for Peace-building ii. Strengthening Civil Society for Peace-building iii. Communications for Peace-building b. Capacity Building for Governance c. Strengthening Civil Society for Development (including Peace-building)	UNDP, ECA UNDP, ECA UNDP, ECA UNDP, ECA UNDP, ECA	UNHCR UNESCO, UNICEF UNESCO, UNICEF, FAO ILO, World Bank, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNEP, UNHCR UNESCO, DPCSD, ILO, UNICEF
4. HARNESSING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT	World Bank, ECA, UNIDO, UNESCO	DPCSD, UNCTAD, ITU
5. PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICA THROUGH SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION	ECA	ECLAC, ESCAP, UNCTAD, DPCSD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNDP
6. BASIC EDUCATION FOR ALL AFRICAN CHILDREN	World Bank, UNESCO	UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNDP, WFP, ILO
7. HEALTH SECTOR REFORM	World Bank, WHO	UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA
8. POVERTY REDUCTION THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF THE INFORMAL SECTOR AND EMPLOYMENT GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES	ECA, ILO	UNDP, DPCSD, World Bank, UNIDO, UNESCO, IFAD, FAO, WFP
9. SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS IN ENVIRONMENTALLY MARGINAL AREAS	UNDP, UNSO	FAO, WFP, IFAD, UNEP
10. SUBSTANTIAL DEBT RELIEF	IMF, World Bank	UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNCTAD, WTO

	Priorities	Lead Agencies	Cooperating Agencies
11.	PARTNERSHIP INNOVATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH:		
a.	Goal-oriented Regional For a	World Bank, UNDP	UNICEF
b.	Use of Goal-oriented Country Programmes	World Bank, UNDP	
c.	Broadening Participation in Consultative Groups and Roundtable	World Bank, UNDP	
12.	TRADE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITIES	UNCTAD	UNDP, WTO, UNIDO, FAO, ECA, ADB, UNDP, World Bank, ITC, UNESCO, IMF, ICAO
13.	INTERNAL RESOURCE MOBILIZATION	World Bank, IMF	ECA

Revised Clusters, Priorities, and Participating Agencies

Priorities	Coordinating agencies	Cooperating agencies
1. WATER a. Assuring Sustainable and Equitable Freshwater b. Household Water Security c. Freshwater Assessments d. Water for Food Production	World Bank, UNEP World Bank, UNEP World Bank, UNEP World Bank, UNEP	UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, ECA, WHO, UNIDO, WMO, SADC, UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP, UNESCO, HABITAT, WMO, UNESCO, IAEA, FAO, UNDP, ECA, IFAD, DDSMS, WMO, IAEA
2. FOOD SECURITY a. Land Degradation and Desertification Control b. Soil Quality Improvement c. Food Security with special emphasis on women	FAO FAO FAO	UNDP, IFAD, UNESCO, UNEP, WMO, IAEA, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNEP, IAEA, WFP, UNIFEM, IFAD, UNICEF, UNFPA
3. GOVERNANCE a. Peace-building, Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation through: i. Strengthening OAU's Capacity for Peace-building ii. Strengthening Civil Society for Peace-building iii. Communications for Peace-building b. Capacity Building for Governance c. Strengthening Civil Society for Development (including Peace-building)	UNDP, ECA UNDP, ECA UNDP, ECA UNDP, ECA UNDP, ECA	UNHCHR UNESCO, UNICEF UNESCO, UNICEF, FAO ILO, World Bank, UNHCHR, UNESCO, UNEP UNESCO, OSCAL, ILO, UNICEF, UNFPA
4. HARNESSING INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT	ECA	DPCSD, UNCTAD, ITU, World Bank, WIPO, UNESCO, UNIDO
5. PARTNERSHIP WITH AFRICA THROUGH SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION	ECA	ECLAC, ESCAP, UNCTAD, OSCAL, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNDP
6. BASIC EDUCATION FOR ALL AFRICAN CHILDREN	World Bank, UNESCO	UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, UNDP, WFP, ILO
7. HEALTH SECTOR REFORM	World Bank, WHO	UNICEF, UNESCO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA
8. POVERTY REDUCTION THROUGH THE PROMOTION OF THE INFORMAL SECTOR AND EMPLOYMENT GENERATING OPPORTUNITIES INCLUDING IN URBAN SETTLEMENTS	ECA, ILO, HABITAT, UNDP	OSCAL, World Bank, UNIDO, UNESCO, IFAD, FAO, WFP, UNFPA, UNDCP
9. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INCLUDING SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS	UNDP, UNEP	FAO, WFP, IFAD, HABITAT, ECAM, IMO, UNFPA, UNIDO

	Priorities	Coordinating agencies	Cooperating agencies
10.	SUBSTANTIAL DEBT RELIEF	IMF, World Bank	UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNCTAD, WTO
11.	PARTNERSHIP INNOVATIONS FOR EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION WITH:		
a.	Use of Goal-oriented Country Programmes	World Bank, UNDP	UNICEF
b.	Broadening Participation in Consultative Groups and Roundtable	World Bank, UNDP	
12.	TRADE ACCESS	UNCTAD	UNDP, WTO, UNIDO, FAO, ECA, ADB, UNDP, World Bank, ITC, UNESCO, IMF, ICAO
13.	INTERNAL RESOURCE MOBILIZATION	World Bank, IMF	ECA
14.	REGIONAL COOPERATION AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION	ECA	UNCTAD, ICAO
15.	ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION	UNCTAD, ECA	UNIDO
16.	INTEGRATING GENDER CONCERNS IN DEVELOPMENT	ECA, UNIFEM	UNDP, UNFPA
17.	INTEGRATING POPULATION CONCERNS IN DEVELOPMENT	UNFPA	ECA, UNDP, UNFEM

UNSI, 15 June 1999

Summary of Responses to Questionnaire for Resident Coordinators

The questionnaire disseminated to United Nations Resident Coordinators elicited information on the understanding that the responses would not attribute to any individual. Therefore, this summary contains only statistical information about the responses received. Seventeen Resident Coordinators responded.

The questionnaire asked each Resident Coordinator if he or she was familiar with SIA and whether there was communication with the SIA Secretariat. It also requested judgments about:

- the Initiative's overall value to date at the country level,
- the specific value of current SIA sectoral priorities,
- the potential value of SIA if changed in various ways, and
- whether the changes, if made, would warrant the Initiative's continuation.

Not all respondents answered all questions, and not all answers were easily categorized. Nevertheless, the answers clearly demonstrated a predominance of views, as summarized below.

In the chart that follows, the first column identifies a question posed; the second column indicates the number of affirmative responses to that question; the third column indicates the number of additional responses that were in the affirmative, but qualified so as to indicate only a slightly affirmative response; and the fourth column indicates the number of negative responses.

ISSUE	YES	SLIGHTLY	NO
Are you familiar with SIA?	13	3	1
Is it valuable to your country programme overall?	1	4	12
Does your programme benefit from SIA sectoral priorities?	2		15
Is there dialogue with the SIA Secretariat?	1	1	13
Could SIA be changed to increase its value?	12		5
If changed as you suggest, should it be continued?	4		10

It should be noted that most Resident Coordinators responded positively when asked to identify changes that could improve SIA. However, a number of those who did so also expressed concern that SIA could divert attention and scarce resources from implementation of the UNDAF process, which they believed to be the appropriate mechanism for in-country coordination of UN programmes. Thus, some who identified desirable changes, nevertheless favoured termination of SIA even if those changes were made.

Biographic Data on Evaluators

Harris Mule is a development economist and policy analyst with a distinguished career of public service and consultancies to the African Development Bank, the International Food Policy Research Institute, the World Bank and other institutions. He was Assistant President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development from 1990-1991, following long service as Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and Planning of Kenya. Mr. Mule previously served in other senior positions in the Ministry, including as chief economist. His professional associations include the African Capacity Building Foundation, the African Economic Research Consortium, Transparency International, the United Nations Research Institute in Social Development and the United Nations University. He holds degrees in business administration, economics and development planning from the University of Denver and from Harvard University.

Kerfalla Yansane is a consultant to the African Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa, the International Monetary Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and other international institutions. He was Governor of the Central Bank of Guinea from 1986-1996 during a major transition to a market economy and restructuring of Guinea's entire financial sector. In that capacity he served as Alternate Governor of the African Development Bank, International Monetary Fund and World Bank, and as Governor of the Islamic Development Bank. Prior to his government service he was a professor of economics at universities in Paris and Dakar. He is Vice Chairman of the Board of the African Economic Research Consortium and a member of the Policy Advisory Group of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest. Dr. Yansane is the author of extensive publications on money and banking in Africa. He holds a doctorate from the Sorbonne and a post-graduate diploma in economics and finance from the Institut d'études politiques de Paris.

James Michel has had a long career of public service with the United States Government and with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. In the U.S. Department of State he served as Principal Deputy Legal Adviser and as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs. After service as U.S. Ambassador to Guatemala he joined the U.S. Agency for International Development as Assistant Administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean and later served as Acting Deputy Administrator and Acting Administrator. From 1994 until 1999 he was Chair of the Development Assistance Committee of the OECD, where he led international efforts to coordinate the aid policies of all major donors. In 1999 he returned to USAID as Counselor. He left government service at the end of 2000 to become an independent consultant in international development cooperation. He holds a law degree (Juris Doctor) from Saint Louis University.